

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 24, 2005

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School Committee held a meeting on this date at

6:30 p.m. in the Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Bill Clay, Paul McFadden, and Frank Maher. Member William Munroe arrived at 6:52 p.m. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; Director of Curriculum Philip D. Thornton; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo; Assistant Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar; and Principal Boulé were present. Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester left early at 9:00 p.m.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Chair DeSack moved to go into Executive Session at 6:42 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 and in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5(a)(8) for Student Disciplinary Hearing, written notice having been provided to the individual informing him/her of the right to hold the hearing in open session. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 0.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:05 p.m.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order in open session in accordance with RIGL 42-46-2(b) at 8:05 p.m. She announced a vote had been taken in Executive Session to uphold the removal of a student from the High School volleyball team for the final game. Voted 5 – 2. Members Munroe and McFadden voted no.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Superintendent Seitsinger read the District Mission Statement.

OPEN FORUM – Member Clay updated members on a number of House Bills and their current status.

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report - Jaclyn Manchester gave an overview of the various student activities including the Kristi Lussier Memorial Walk on June 4th, Graduation on June 11th at 11: am at the Ryan Center, the Boys' Volleyball championship game being played at CCRI on June 25th, and Honors Night on June 2nd at 6:30 p.m. in the High School auditorium.

Jr. High School Presentation – Principal Thompson introduced junior high school guidance counselor Catherine Murray. Ms. Murray offered a short video which explained the Parent Partnership Program, (a collaborative program with parents for the bettering of

students), and the School Resource Officer program, (a program that, through

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working hand-in-hand with administrators, parents, teachers, and students, Resource Officer Petrarca ensures a safe, comfortable, learning environment for all).

Principal Thompson introduced music teacher/band director Gregg Charest who gave an overview of the music program. Mr. Charest explained there are currently two ensemble based classes, and there are 115 students voluntarily enrolled in these two classes, or approximately 1/3rd of the student body. Mr. Charest commented that over the last few months, through the efforts of Principal Boulé, Principal Thompson, Mr. Runner, Mr. Charest, and the junior high scheduling committee, all scheduling issues have been resolved for the next academic year and they were able to meet the needs of every student as well as the faculty.

Lastly, Principal Thompson gave a brief PowerPoint presentation and explained that the junior high school was recently ranked High Performing and Improving by the Rhode Island Department of Education and that all 21 benchmark requirements were met. He showed data relating to the junior high school's performance in its most recent participation in state assessments, noting math scores

were above state average and ELA scores, in some areas, were slightly below state average. He mentioned that thanks to the recent budget approval, the junior high will be able to hire a Reading Specialist for the next academic year, which will assist in addressing this area. He communicated that there are quarterly class assemblies held in the junior high school at which the bullying policy is routinely reviewed, a new more flexible schedule has been approved by 93% of the junior high faculty for next year, and all teams hope to move to looping next year. There will be more on looping at a future date.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member Clay moved to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

The following items were approved:

A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of May 10, 2005

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of absence (As recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Roxanne Tisch request for an extension of her unpaid maternity leave of absence from her Sr. High School Math Teacher

position

for the 2005-2006 academic year.

3. Resignations

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4. Non-Renewals – Rescind - On hold until June 14, 2005

5. Grievances – On hold until June 14, 2005

C. Bills – In the amount of \$277,673.39

End Consent Agenda

D. Correspondence – (1) Memo from Commissioner McWalters regarding Impact of Assessment Transition Plan on School and District Accountability Classifications, (2) Mission Statement-1st Draft, (3) E-mail Correspondence from Member McFadden to Chair DeSack, (4) RI Association of School Committees Budget Lobbying Workshop Notification, (5) Letter from the RI Dept. of Education Regarding the 2005-2006 School Calendar Acceptance, (6) Memo to School Committee Members from Superintendent Seitsinger Regarding the Alternative Learning Program, (7) SORICO Joint Meeting Invitation, (8) E-Mail from Judy Spremulli Regarding Finance Hearing on 5/25/05, (9) EWG Association of Parents and Teachers Meeting Minutes from April 12, 2005

Member Clay asked that correspondence item (4) RI Association of School Committees Budget Lobbying Workshop Notification be pulled for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS -Lineham Roof – Superintendent Seitsinger provided members with the following information regarding the leaky roof at Lineham School: To date, two contractors have assessed the roof and an additional contractor is schedule to assess it on

May 25th, the district has not yet received any estimates of cost, an environmental specialist has assessed the building's environment – (a report to follow), the classroom particularly affected is no longer being used, and the class has relocated to a different classroom.

Members asked several inquiring questions.

Director of Maintenance William Plumley communicated the existing roof appears to be approximately 40 years old, as core samples indicate it was previously repaired in the early 1960's, and it will take approximately a two-week timeframe to complete the construction of a new permanently fixed roof.

Member Clay recommended this item remain on the agenda until the roof is completely repaired.

Director of Administration Robert Ross recommended, in order to better control the environment of the building, the committee think

long-term and as part of the process include the removal of carpeting, replace it with VCT (tile), remove the old roof insulation, and install new drop-ceilings.

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Member Maher requested that in order to keep members better informed, Administration provide a more timely notice through the e-mail system to School Committee members on matters of concern within the district, particularly those relating to health and safety issues.

Members Munroe and McFadden requested that notification be issued to all members simultaneously.

A parent of a Lineham School student spoke to clarify that she sent e-mail notification regarding this matter to any School Committee members that she had addresses for. She also expressed her concern for all children attending school at Lineham. She related that special needs children are more sensitive to environmental allergens and Lineham School is the building housing these special needs children. She communicated that she feels the educational program itself is spectacular and requested that the committee take into consideration that where these students are housed is equally as important as the education they receive.

Chair DeSack communicated that she will add to a future agenda, discussion on appropriate e-mail notification of correspondence to School Committee members from Administration. Consensus was to further discuss the matter of notification to members at a future committee meeting and to seek legal opinion regarding the appropriate operation of e-mail use by School Committee members in relationship to the Open Meeting Laws and any other pertinent situation.

Letter of Support Vote for Charter School Reform Bill – Superintendent Seitsinger made reference to enclosed correspondence (8) E-Mail from Judy Spremulli Regarding Finance Hearing on 5/25/05. Dr. Seitsinger recommended committee members issue a short letter of support, signed by Chair DeSack and the Superintendent, for House Bill No. 6421. He explained this bill, if passed, would cut Charter School costs in half and that the district is among the top ten in the state affected by Charter School costs.

Clerk Coutcher moved to issue a letter of support for House Bill No. 6421. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero.

Members McFadden and Maher voiced their concern regarding endorsing a letter of support without actually reading the proposed House Bill first. Member Maher suggested, should this matter occur again in the future, members be provided with a copy of the House

Bill which can be obtained at the RI General Assembly website.

Chair DeSack repeated the motion on the floor, to issue a letter of support for House Bill No. 6421 (based on the summary provided).

Voted 4 – 2 – 1. Members Munroe and

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McFadden voted no. Member Maher abstained, stating he was in favor of supporting the House Bill, but without first reading it would not vote for sending a letter of support.

Discussion of Lay-Off Procedures – Attorney Nicholas Gorham explained the lay-off hearing procedures and the School Committee's role during the hearing. He referenced a confidential memo from the Superintendent and explained its text.

Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester left at this time.

Council 94 Lay-Offs – Director of Administration Robert Ross communicated he has met with Council 94's leadership and business manager and they are moving forward with the reduction of three regular education teacher assistants and one half-time assistant.

Vice Chair Cicero made inquiry as to whether or not a particular program was being eliminated at Wawaloam. Mr. Ross,

Superintendent Seitsinger, and Chair DeSack noted this issue could not be discussed and it was not an agenda item.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Participation in Extra Curricular Activities, Including Athletics Policy #8607-1st Official Reading – Member Clay explained the policy committee had not included parent involvement, as previously agreed upon, in the Academic Probation section, second bullet - Students, working with the principal, will formalize a plan to evaluate the deficient grades, as Principal Boulé indicated the time-frame is impractical because in a three-week time period, it may take as long as one-week to get a parent in for a meeting.

After lengthy discussion, consensus was to approve the 1st Reading, make revisions to the wording in section Academic Standards – 2., and place this item on the June 14th agenda as a 2nd Reading/Adoption.

Three New Cafeteria Tables at Metcalf School Update – Member Munroe explained he was in contact with an Adirondack representative and the company will not exchange or take back the tables that were ordered. After lengthy discussion, consensus was to hold payment for the order until Adirondack repairs the one broken table and Member Munroe will contact the company representative again to request if they will consider exchanging the 10 foot tables for 12 foot tables. Member Munroe confirmed that the district will not be charged interest for holding up payment. This item will be placed on

the June 14th agenda for further updating.

Non-Discrimination Policy-Students Policy #2151-Adoption – Member Clay moved to adopt Policy #2151. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

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Non-Discrimination Policy-Employees Policy #2150-Adoption – Member Clay moved to adopt Policy #2150. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 - 0.

Epi-Pen Update – Vice Chair Cicero explained that Senator Roberts is planning to make an amendment to House Bill No. 269 which would add bus drivers and bus monitors to the list of individuals mentioned in RIGL 16-21-22 with regard to administering an Epi-pen in emergency situations. She requested the committee send a letter of support for Senator Roberts' soon to be submitted House Bill sub-A to 269 once it is brought forth.

Member Clay moved to send a letter on behalf of the School Committee signed by Chair DeSack supporting the Epi-Pen House Bill

No. 269 as amended. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6-0-1. Member Maher abstained, stating he did support sending the letter, but without first reading it would not vote for it.

REPORTS/COMMENTS – Member Maher asked for clarification regarding the

May 11, 2005 NEASC survey memo addressed to all committee members from Director of Curriculum Phil Thornton and for a deadline extension.

Dr. Thornton addressed Member Maher's questions and extended the deadline to the end of June 2005.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – June 14th – School Committee Meeting

Special Education Presentation, June 15th – Tentative Job Fair Certified, 4:00 p.m.

High School Library, June 9th – Space Needs Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.,

Administration Office

Chair DeSack also noted that Graduation Day is June 11, 2005 at 11:00 a.m. at the Ryan Center and asked which members plan to attend the ceremony.

Member Clay cancelled his request to pull correspondence item, (4)

**RI Association of School Committees Budget Lobbying Workshop
Notification.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

**ADJOURNMENT – Member Maher moved to adjourn at 10:35 p.m.
Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK